

中華佛學學報第 08 期 (p455-481)：(民國 84 年)，臺北：中華佛學研究所，<http://www.chibs.edu.tw>
Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal, No. 08, (1995)
Taipei: The Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies
ISSN: 1017—7132

A Pre-Buddhist Meditation System and its Early Modifications by Gotama the Bodhisattva (I)

Biswadeb Mukherjee

Visiting professor Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies

p. 455

Summary

The present paper is the first part of the article dealing with the modifications wrought by Gotama the Bodhisattva in the Śramaṇa system of meditation which had gained prominence even before the rise of the B

uddhism. The problem has been dealt with reference to the 4 rūpa jhānas created by the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins long before the advent of the Buddha. In this paper an attempt has been made to form a clear idea about the 4 rūpa jhānas.

The formulas of the 4 jhānas contain informations not only about the mental states indifferent stages of meditation but also about the process leading to such states. The interpretations of these formulas given in the Buddhist commentaries are of a much later date, and are more a reflection of the current Buddhist thoughts than that of the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavāda.

It is, however, imperative that to understand truly the import of the 4 jhānas we must understand the philosophy of the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavāda of which these jhānas originally formed a part. An attempt has, therefore, been made to reconstruct this philosophy. It has been shown that the sole purpose for which the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins led a religious life was not to gain enlightenment but to experience an agreeable feeling like pītisukha, sukha etc. Nibbāna merely stood for an unhindered enjoyment of an agreeable feeling. The medit

ative technique, the modes of formulation of the 4 jhāna states are but the products of this philosophy. And it is in the light of this philosophy that we have tried to understand the import of the jhāna formulas, comprehend the true meaning of the technical terms like upekkha, sukha, vitakka, vicāra etc. and to reconstruct the meditative technique employed by the Parama-dittadhamma-

p. 456

nibbānavādins.

The present paper thus prepares the ground for the proper understanding of the extent and nature of the modifications made by Gotama the Bodhisattva in the Sramana system of meditation. This contribution of the Bodhisattva will be discussed in the second part of the article.

p. 457

I . INTRODUCTION

It is well known that the Buddhists in its process of growth incorporated and modified many non-Buddhist ideas and practices. This process

seems to have started with Gotama still faring on his journey towards enlightenment.^[1] The ideas modified by Gotama the Bodhisttva remained a part and parcel of the Way later preached by the Buddha. This process can be fruitfully studied with reference to what is generally known as the system of four rūpameditations (jhāna).

The Brahmājāla-sutta mentions the four jhanas as a part of the spiritual practice of the religious sect of the Parama-ditṭha-dhamma-nibbāna vādins.

^[2] It appears that this was the earliest of the religious sects to be associated with the four jhānas. Again the Buddhist suttas speak of a system of meditation where the four jhānas are followed by the four ārupya-samāpattis.^[3] These eight stages of meditation are jointly called aṭṭha-samāpattis in the Nikāyas. It appears that the followers of the ārupya meditation also practised the four jhānas but did not accept these stages as final attainments, as the Nirvāṇa in this very world, and proceeded further up to the stage of neither-perception-nor-not-perception. We will later see that both these groups of meditators followed the same technique of negating the undesirable mental factor only for attaining a higher state of meditation.^[4]

This view may be objected on the ground that the account in which the four jhānas precede the four ārupya samāpattis is a creation of the Buddhists and does not reflect the original tradition of the ārupya meditators. In support of this

p. 458

opinion we may point out that even a cursory glance at the four jhānas recorded in the Buddhist suttas in a gradually ascending order, will immediately show that the higher states of meditation invariably reject a mental factor of the immediately preceding lower jhānas. The formulations of two such states of meditation even use identical expression for the mental factor valued in the lower state but rejected in the higher state of meditation. On the contrary the first ārupya samāpatti which immediately follows the fourth rūpa jhāna, does not reject any of the mental factors attained in the fourth rūpa jhāna. The first ārupya meditation does not, therefore, appear to have been necessarily preceded by the fourth rūpa jhāna.

This objection could be negotiated if we pay attention to the technical terms characterising the fourth rūpa jhāna, viz. *adukkhamasukham* and

purified sati (sati-parisuddhi).^[5]None of these jhanic traits could be given up by any meditator who is striving to advance further than the fourth jhāna. Purified sati constitutes the very essence of the mental state of an advanced meditator. Its presence in the first ārupya meditation is to be taken for granted even though it is not mentioned by name in the jhanic formula. Moreover the feeling (vedanā) adukkhamasukham being a neutral feeling, is not an impediment to spiritual growth, and should not be given up.^[6]We may even insist that this neutral feeling must be preserved, for the absence of this feeling would automatically give rise to some other feeling which would agitate the mind. The point to be taken note of in this respect is that none of the mental factors in the fourth jhāna is dispensable, or should be given up.

On the basis of the above discussion we may conclude that the mere absence or rejection of a characteristic of the fourth jhāna in the description of the first ārupya meditation cannot be construed as an evidence against the tradition that the first ārupya meditation immediately follows the fourth jhāna. Moreover this

tradition is confirmed by the statement that the first ārupya meditation is attained by transcending the sphere of rūpa.^[7] The system of four jhānas practised by the Buddhists as well as by two influential groups of pre-Buddhist śramaṇas may be regarded as one of the important contributions made by the śramaṇas to the religious culture of India.

As already noted the Parama-dīṭṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins appears to be the earliest religious group to practise the four jhānas, and thus they should be credited with the original formulation of the four jhanic states. It is, therefore, obvious that to understand the transformation the system of four rūpa meditations underwent at the hand of Gotama the Bodhisattva we must first be clear about the exact implication of these jhanic formulas and other aspects of the Parama-dīṭṭhadhamma-nibbānavāda philosophy.

Our study of the Parama-dīṭṭhadhamma-nibbānavāda philosophy, however, is bound to suffer greatly from the scarcity of materials, as no literature of this group has come down to us. Our only source consists of the fragments of information preserved in the Buddhist scripture about this group. The available translations of such materials are generally

y based on later Buddhist commentaries by Buddhaghosa and others, whereas the Parama-ditṭha-nibbānavādins flourished long before the Buddha. Thus there is a gap of more than 1000 years between the later Buddhist commentaries and the original formulation of the non-Buddhist materials preserved in the Buddhist scriptures. Moreover much of such materials became a part of Buddhism even during the lifetime of the Buddha. Consequently the Buddhists in course of time came to interpret the four jhānas and other materials in the light of their own philosophy. This situation warns us against blind acceptance of the explanations given in the later Buddhist texts.

The philosophy and the four jhanic formulations are but a reflection of their jhanic experience and the method of meditation followed by them.

All these aspects form an integrated whole. A proper understanding of any part of this system of meditation is, therefore, dependent on the understanding of other parts.

p. 460

For the sake of convenience we may start with a translation of the relevant materials as given in the Brahmajāla-sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya. Th

the deviations from the current translations will be justified later in course of our discussion.

II . TRANSLATION

a) Preparatory stage

The relevant passages of the Brahmajālasutta giving a short sketch of the philosophy and the religious practices of the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins may be translated as follows:

Bhikkhus, there are some samanās and brāhmaṇas, advocates of the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world, who declare in five ways the supreme Nibbāna for the existing beings. On what authoritative tradition, on what basis do these honourable samanās and brāhmaṇas declare the supreme Nibbāna through 5 objects in the visible world for an existing being?

Here some monk and brāhmaṇa speak thus and hold such a false view (ditṭhi):

"Sir, as the soul (attā) which is supplied with the five objects of desire, is in complete possession of them, enjoys himself, Si

r, the soul thus has attained the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world." [8]

Thus do some proclaim the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world for an existing being.

b) Final stage

To him someone else says:

"Sir there is indeed this atta of which you speak. I do not say that this

p. 461

does not exist, but this atta thus has not attained the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world. Why?

Sir, the desirable objects (kāma) are impermanent, painful, and naturally subject to change; as they become transformed grief, lamentation, pain, melancholy and despair (soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassa-upāyāsā) arise. Since this attā having separated itself from desirable objects and unwholesome mental states attains the first jhāna and abides therein which is born of separation

(vivekajam), characterised by rapturous happiness (pītisukham) and accompanied by thoughts of enquiry and judgemental decision (savitakkam savicāram), [9]to that extent it has attained the supreme nibbana in the visible world. "

Thus do some declare the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world of anexisting being.

To him someone else says:

"Sir, there is indeed this attā of which you speak. I do not say that this does not exist, but the attā has not thus attained the supreme nibbana in the visible world. Why ?

Since in this case (the mind) is involved with vitakka and vicāra, it is called gross (olārikam). Since the attā due to calming down of the vitakka and vicāra (vitakka–vicāraṇaṃ vūpasamā) attains and abides in the second jhāna which is characterised by internal clarity, a state of mind directed towards one object, [10]absence of vitakka and vicāra, born of concentration (samādhijam), of rapturous happiness (pītisukham), so the attā has attained the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world. "

Thus do some declare the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world

.

To him. Why ?

p. 462

"Indeed the attā has not thus attained the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world. Since in that case (the mental state) is merged in joy (pīṭigatam), and is a state of agitation of mind (cetaso ubbillā-vitattam), [11]so this is called gross. Since this attā due to its detachment (virāgā)

p. 463

from rapture (pīti), is equanimous (upekkhako), mindful (sato) and understanding (sampajañño) and experiences happiness (sukha)

—whom (i. e. the attā) the arjans call "equanimous, mindful , and dwelling in happiness ' — dwells having attained the third jhāna, thus the attā has attained the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world. "

Thus do some declare the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world

.

c) The fourth jhāna

To him. Why ?

"Since in that case sukha (happiness) means the enjoyment brought about by attention (ābhoga)^[12] of mind, due to this it is called gross (oḷārika). Since, sir, due to the abandoning (pahānā) of happiness, due to the abandoning of pain (dukkha) due to the previous disappearance of gladness and sadness (somanas sa-domanassānam atthagamā) this attā attains and abides in the fourth jhāna of neither-pain-nor-happiness (adukkhamasukham) and purity of mindfulness due to indifference (upekkhā-sati-pārisuddhim),

^[13] this attā has attained the supreme Nibbāna in this world. "

Thus do some declare the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world of an existing being.

III. PHILOSOPHY

The core of the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbāna philosophy mainly deals with the three types of feelings dukkha, sukha and adukkhamasukham. It is, therefore, necessary to know clearly what these concepts stand for before we commence our study of the philosophy of this religious group.

These three feelings together with pīti are all mental reactions to physical

p. 464

sensations. They are all associated with the body and thus differ from somanassa and domanassa which are purely mental in origin. The connection of pīti with the body is clear from a statement in the Dīgha Nikāya I, 73:

Gladness (pāmojja) arises within him; thus gladdened rapture (pīti) arises in him; and when he is rapturous his body becomes tranquil.

Tranquility in turn leads to sukha (physical happiness) on the basis of which mind becomes concentrated. Buddhaghosa's description of the

five types of pīti[14] also supports this view. According to him khuddikā-pīti (minor rapture) is first to appear and can cause the hairs of the body to stand. Khanikāpīti (momentary rapture) is like lightning, but can not be sustained for long. Okkantikāpīti (showering rapture) runs through the body in waves, producing a thrill but not a lasting impact; Ubbegapīti (uplifting rapture) causes levitation while pharaṇāpīti (all-pervading rapture) suffuses the whole body. Again Buddhaghosa states that pīti annihilates dukkha which suggests the physical association of dukkha (bodily pain). The Parama-ditṭha-dhamma-nibbānavādins also believed in the physical association of pīti and the three feelings for they also differentiated between the three types of feelings and somanassa - domanassa. Moreover pīti is inseparably connected with sukha, and sukha is explicitly stated to be experienced through the kāya[15] in the description of the third jhāna.

The Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins were divided into four groups. Each of these groups identified the experience of one of the four jhānas with the attainment of Nibbāna in this visible world. The fourth jhāna represents the highest peak of agreeable experience that can be attained by this religious sect

p. 465

It can be reasonably assumed that like the different religious groups of that time the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins also strove for the cessation of dukkha, the painful feeling.

The end of dukkha may either merely mean the absence of dukkha, or it may indicate the presence of an agreeable feeling which prevents the rise of dukkha in mind, and thus marks the cessation of any further experience of the painful feeling. As we have already pointed out, dukkha, being a feeling (vedanā), is like the other two feelings, invariably connected with the body, and the notion of "I".^[16] So long a meditator possesses a body, he is bound to experience one feeling or the other, and in accordance with his spiritual development, will either appreciate it as the final goal or be dissatisfied with any of the feelings other than the feeling of adukkhamasukham (neither-pain-nor-happiness). Such a feeling is regarded as the highest, the best (parama) nibbāna in the world. The use of the attribute "parama" shows that the feeling recognised as Nibbāna can only stand for one type of agreeable feeling, and not refer to agreeable feelings of different types. The eradication of th

e falsereality of "I" is neither attempted nor aspired for, as the sole aim of spiritual life is the personal enjoyment of an agreeable feeling.

Each of the four jhanic states contains two types of mental factors. The first type (e. g. sati, sampajanna etc.) represents the knower aspect of mind while the second type deals with that aspect which is to be known. The second type includes pītisukha, sukha, and adukkhamasukham which not only negate dukkha, the painful feeling, but also constitute positive, agreeable elements to be felt. Thus of all the factors in the jhanic states only these three types of feelings can be equated with the supreme Nibbāna in the visible world.

As the three feelings are co-existent with the body, one can only try not to be overwhelmed by a feeling which is either painful or unsatisfactory to him. One can even so exert oneself that these undesirable feelings do not arise in the mind. This situation finds its reflection in the use of such terms as virāga (detachment), pahāna (giving up) and upekkhā (indifference).^[17] All these terms can be used.

p. 466

only with reference to something which has not been destroyed, which

h may manifest itself under suitable circumstances. One can only give up what one possesses. One cannot be indifferent to or detached from what is non-existent. All these terms refer to feelings associated with the body and possessed by the attā. It is, however, possible to have full control over the moods of happiness and depression (somanassa and domanassa), and to cause their disappearance, for the factors responsible for their origin are exclusively mental. According to the Milinda Panha:

"Since the ground and condition for the arising of the feelings of bodily pain are not yet removed, therefore he may yet experience the feeling of bodily pain. Since however, the ground and condition for the arising of the feeling of mental pain are removed, therefore he can no longer experience the feeling of mental pain."
[18]

This state of things is indicated by the use of the term "atthagama" with reference to somanassa and domanassa.[19]

They believed that the agreeable feelings associated with the body could be made stable through meditation. This conclusion is based on the

e observation that they criticise kama and the agreeable feelings in different ways. Kāma or five objects of desire are criticised on the ground that they are subject to change and destruction, and thus cause grief, depression etc. Here the criticism is based on the impermanency of the outside objects of desire. But the internal, agreeable feelings connected with the body are not criticised on the ground of impermanency; these are criticised because these are gross. [20] The meditator

p. 467

is attached to the enjoyment of agreeable feelings and he wants to have more intense and higher type of enjoyment through subtler feelings. But he is not worried about the possibility of the absence of a feeling which is agreeable to him. This shows that he is confident that the feeling is stable and not subject to involuntary changes. A feeling is considered gross if it adversely affects the quality of enjoyment as well as the power of the mind to enjoy. For grosser the feeling is, the greater is the agitation it causes and thus diminishes the concentration and the intensity of awareness of an object. The feeling of *adukkhamasukham* in the fourth *jhāna* is, therefore, most suitable for the enjoyment because

the nature of the agreeable feeling is so neutral and subtle that it does not affect at all the mindfulness and awareness of the meditator.

The grossness of feeling, as it will be shown later, is due to the presence of vicāra and vitakka in the first jhāna, due to its being ubbillaṅkita in the second jhāna, and due to the ābhoga of mind in the third jhāna. [\[21\]](#)

The Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins believed in the notion of attā and were actually striving for the enjoyment of ego-centric pleasure.

So their mindfulness and awareness were not perfect, and they failed to understand the true nature of vedanā. It is also for the same reason that they failed to appreciate the role of mindfulness and awareness as a means to realise the truth. To them these mental faculties were for perfecting the quality of experience of vedanā. Moreover this led to imperfect development of morality, as is evident from their concept of akusala-dhamma.

From the above discussion it follows that the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavāda is a kind of Sakkāya-ditṭhi according to which the attā has vedanā. This religious sect was not concerned with the eternity or de

structibility of attā. Their Nibbāna was the attainment by the attā of an agreeable feeling which is extremely subtle, neutral, unchangeable (i. e. not subject to involuntary change) and absolutely free from dukkha . Every human being possessed a number of souls (attā), and each of these souls enjoyed a particular type of agreeable feeling; the most subtle of such feelings (i. e. adukkhamasukham) was worthy of being

p. 468

accepted by all the groups of the Parma-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins as the supreme nibbāna in the visible world.

IV. Comments on the jhanic formula

a) On the progression from lower to higher jhāna

In the preparatory stage an individual tries to be free from suffering (dukkha) through the enjoyment of five types of kāma (panca vatthuhi).

When he has complete mastery over the kāmas with which he is abundantly provided (samappitam samangibhutam), he thinks that he has attained Nibbāna, the very opposite of dukkha. Now what is meant by kame in the present context ?

Kāma may mean either "desire" or "object of desire". In the present context kāma should be understood in the sense of "object of desire", for it is stated that when kāma undergoes change or destruction, one suffers grief, lamentation etc. Here kāma cannot mean "desire", for destruction of desire is always considered desirable as a spiritual attainment, and an ascetic would surely not grieve for it. So kāma means five types of desirable sense-objects. Objects of mind or dhammas are not included in the category of kāma. The Buddhists also used the term kāma in the sense of sense-objects in some suttas.[\[22\]](#)

It is to be noted that the agreeable mental state arising out of the enjoyment of five types of external objects is not called "sukha". It is not given any particular name, and is simply equated with the supreme Nibbāna as it keeps in abeyance the disagreeable mental states. Sukha is a technical term which stands for a particular type of feeling of happiness to be experienced only in meditation of the rupa sphere.

According to the information preserved in the Brahmajālasutta, the meditator understands the disadvantages of kama because of its impermanency and the resultant unwholesome mental states of grief etc. Co

sequently he separates himself from the desirable sense-objects and unwholesome mental states (*kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehivivicca*). This sequence of happenings in the life of a meditator is instructive. It is obvious that the meditator's separation from

p. 469

kāma and *akusala-dhamma* is the result of his judgemental deliberations showing the disadvantages of *kāma*. Such deliberations, as we shall see later, are comparable to *vitakka* referred to in the *Dvedhāvitakka sutta*. These deliberations are based on the direct experience of the meditator regarding the impermanency of sense-objects, and they create aversion for the sense-objects and thus enable the meditator to get separated from them.

As already noted in the preparatory stage, the meditator experiences *kāmas* and the resultant painful mental states of grief etc. This is immediately followed by the statement that the meditator enters the first *jhāna*, the description of which includes such expressions as *avitakka* and *savicāra* and the information about the giving up of the *kāmas* and the *akusala-dhammas*. On the basis of the account given in the prep

aratory stage[23]we canconclude that kāma means the five desirable sense-objects, and the akusala-dhammasrefer to the unwholesome mental states (e. g. grief, lamentation etc.) one experiences dueto the involuntary separation from or destruction of the kāmas. The vicāra and the vitakka,on the other hand, refer to judgemental deliberations concerning only the experience of theimpermanency of the kāmas and the resultant painful mental states. The vitakka and vicāra,as we shall see later, come to an end before the attainment of the second jhāna. But it doesnot mean that the meditator has got rid of all types of deliberations. There are judgemental deliberations between any two states of meditation. The judgemental deliberations prefacingthe attainments of the second, third and fourth jhānas are, however, not concerned with kāma, and so no longer called vitakka and vicāra.[24]Both the vitakka and vicāra, and the akusala-dhammas fall within the range of experience of an ordinary person.

These mental states are called "not good"(akusala) for they represent a situation whichisjust the opposite of Nibbāna, the ideal agreeable feeling. The term akusala is not moral inits implication; it merely indica

tes the undesirableness of a mental state that experientially runs counter to Nibbāna.

In order to critically understand the implications of the jhāna formulas it is necessary to pay attention to the following principles relevant to a jhanic state:

p. 470

¹
) Mind in concentration can know only one object at a time.

²
) The description of four jhānas stands for four different types of mental states and includes not only the characteristics connected with the act of knowing but also characteristics indicating the object to be known. For example the terms *sato*, *sampajañña* etc. refer to the knowing aspect of mind while *pīti*, *sukha*, *sukha* etc. to the object to be known.

³
) The characteristics of jhanic experience state are simultaneously present. It is obvious that there can be only one knowable element in the jhanic state that the meditator can be aware of during the series of moments that constitute the duration of a jhāna. The other elements in the jhanic state belong to the aspect of knowing.

We may start with the discussion of the terms of *vitakka* and *vicāra* in the expression "*savitakkaṃ savicāram*", the practice or non-practice of

which is related to the attainments of the first jhāna and the second jhāna respectively. Vasubandhu[25] takes "vitakka" and "vicāra" as two types of thoughts and defines "vitakka" as a mental conversation (manojalpa) of enquiry (paryeṣako) which is characterised by either volition (cetanā) or discernment (prajña), and constitutes the grossness of mind. Vicāra, according to him, is a mental conversation of judgement (pratyaवेक्षका) characterised by either volition or discernment. This view of Vasubandhu is similar to that of the ancient masters.[26] Thus vitakka and vicāra can appear only successively and not simultaneously. Vasubandhu, therefore, pointed out that the first jhāna has only four parts and not five parts, viz. pīti, sukha, samādhi plus vitakka or vicāra.[27]

From the point of view of the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins samādhi is not of primary importance, so it is not explicitly mentioned in the jhāna formula. And we cannot simply drop either the vitakka or the vicāra; both these

p. 471

terms are well-grounded in the tradition as a part of the jhanic formula which not only originated with the parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādi

ns but also was followed by the followers of the Arupya samāpattis, the Buddha and the later Buddhists. Moreover if we accept the view of the vaibhāṣikas, it would follow that the first jhāna is attainable with the help of the gross vitakka only, and the comparatively subtle vicāra is not indispensable.

We have, therefore, to accept both the vitakka and vicāra as being associated with the first jhāna, and at the same time we have to admit that they, being successive, cannot be simultaneously present in the jhanic state. In other words they cannot be regarded as the features of the first jhāna experienced by the meditator in concentration at any given moment. So it follows that the expression "savitakkam savicāram" has to be interpreted in a way that only shows their relatedness to the first jhāna without making them an integral part of the jhāna experienced. This is possible if we take them as belonging to the process leading to the jhāna, but not to the jhanic state. This suggestion is strengthened if we pay attention to the drift of the discussion on the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins as recorded in the Brahmajālasutta. Here we see that the vitakka and vicāra give rise to the separation (viveka) from kāmā and akusaladhammas and this separation in its turn gives rise to the first

t jhāna (vivekajam.....pathamajjhānam) . This shows that the vitakka and vicāra become non-functional before the attainment of the first jhāna; they are not integrated into the jhanic experience, but only are related to the first jhāna through the intermediary state

p. 472

of viveka. This aspect is more explicit in the Dvedhavitakkasutta.

The immediate cause of pītisukha in the first jhāna is viveka from kāmā and akusaladhamma. Concentration of mind cannot be the cause, for the first jhāna is accompanied by vitakka-vicāra. The preparatory stage is also dominated by deliberations, and not by samādhi. Therefore this jhāna is called "born of viveka" (vivekajam).

But how are we to understand the meaning of pītisukha ?

The term pītisukha is a Bahuvrīhic compound qualifying the expression "pathamam jhānam". But what is the relationship between its component parts "pīti" and "sukha" ?

Should it be interpreted as a dvandva meaning pīti and sukha ?

Or should it be taken to mean rapturous happiness, akarmadharaya compound ?

We should take note of the fact that the religious strivings of the Parama-ditṭhadhamma-nibbānavādins were solely directed towards the realisation of an agreeable feeling which to them was the same as the supreme Nibbāna. Every formula of jhānas is a record of important spiritual achievements and the jhanic formulas are so arranged as to show the gradual progression from grosser feeling to subtler feeling. Seen from this point of view it is reasonable to conclude that the term pītisukha should represent only one kind of feeling; the pīti which is not a feeling, is not an important spiritual achievement. It is, therefore, better to take pītisukha as a karmadhāraya compound which expresses clearly the quality of sukha to be felt. The dvanda compound would be a generalised statement about sukha and would not throw any light on the precise quality of sukha. Moreover, only one knowable can be known at a time. Pītisukha as a dvanda compound would mean the simultaneous presence of two knowables implying thereby the ability of mind in concentration to know two objects at one and the same time. But this is not possible. Hence pītisukha should be taken as a karmadhāraya compound meaning "repturous happiness".

We have seen in our discussion of "savitakka" and "savicāra" that the jhāna formula not only describes the jhānic state actually experienced but also the process leading to it. Thus it is possible to interpret the compound "pītisukha" as pīti and sukha if we could have related it to the process leading to the first jhāna. As a part of the process, the awarenesses of pīti and sukha can occur successively. But this interpretation excludes the possibility of mentioning any

p. 473

agreeable feeling as the ultimate goal of the spiritual life. Hence this interpretation is not acceptable. So we have to interpret the compound "pītisukha" as indicating a type of sukha, the quality of which has been influenced adversely by pīti. The expression "pītiyā viragā" will mean the removal of the influence of pīti over sukha.

Some meditators felt dissatisfied with the experience in first jhāna. Due to the presence of vitakka-vicāra this jhāna is considered to be olārika (gross). So the meditator calms down the vitakka-vicāra (vitakka-vicārānaṃ vyupasamā). Consequently his mind becomes more concentrated and he attains the second jhāna which is characterised by the a

absence of vitakka-vicāra, internal clarity (*ajjhataṃ sampasādanaṃ*) and a state of mind directed towards one object (*cataso ekodibhavaṃ*). All these characteristics reveal the nature of the mental state born of concentration (*samādhijam*). The *samādhi* is incidental, and the main factor in this *jhāna* for the meditator is what is to be felt, viz. *pītisukha* or rapturous happiness. Due to the influence of *samadhi*, the second *jhāna* is more calm compared to the first *jhāna*, so the *pītisukha* causes comparatively less agitation, and should be regarded as less gross than the *pītisukha* of the first *jhāna*.

The